

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 7 which would require the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to dedicate one-third of the funds generated by the sale of sport fishing licenses to operation of the State's trout hatchery and inland fisheries programs and achieve increased hatchery and native fish production. Sport fishing in California is a wonderful pastime and it is time we focus on modernizing our hatchery and wild trout programs. While I am signing this bill, I am requesting the legislature address several concerns I have with the bill.

The final version of AB 7 contains a number of problematic provisions that must be amended so that the production goals are reasonable and DFG retains the flexibility to implement this bill in a manner that does the least harm to other important environmental programs. The final result should also reflect the policies established by the Fish and Game Commission and the goals of the Strategic Plan for Trout Management which was developed through a public process.

Specifically, the bill sets an aggressive trout production schedule, including mandates for the production of wild native trout species not currently in production. These prescriptive mandates will be difficult to achieve and must be modified with reasonable goals so that expectations are better aligned to reflect what is sustainable. In addition, DFG must be allowed to use its various fund sources with maximum flexibility. In some instances it will be possible to meet AB 7's financial commitment with fund sources such as federal Sport Fish Restoration Act funds.

Therefore, I am signing this bill with the understanding that the author will work with the administration and stakeholders to develop clean up legislation to adopt these necessary revisions. It is important that changes are made to this bill so that the trout angler's experience can be enhanced without negatively impacting environmental resources, enforcement, and those purchasing licenses that prefer to fish for species other than trout.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger